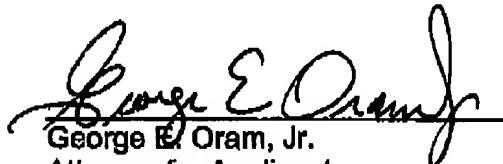


Claims 1, 2 and 5 (renumbered as claims 1-3 as noted in the Notice of Allowance September 13, 2002) are pending in the present application. By this Preliminary Amendment, claim 2 has been amended and claims 6-14 have been added. All amendments and additions are supported by the Specification and Drawings. Thus, no new matter is presented.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300 making reference to Attorney Docket No. 107156-00033.

Respectfully submitted,


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Enclosures: Marked-Up Copy Claims

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MARKED-UP COPY CLAIMS

2. (Amended) The reading system according to claim 1, wherein the second photodetector is further divided by a third dividing line optically parallel with a radial direction of the optical disc[, and];

third difference signal producing means is provided for producing a third difference signal [is provided] based on a difference between the added outputs of photodetecting elements of each side divided by the third dividing line, the prepit information being obtained based on the third difference signal.